

COUNTERTERRORISM THROUGH RETALIATION. MOSSAD'S ANSWER TO MUNICH'S MASSACRE

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Abstract: *An eye for an eye. The biblical saying that sums up the entire Operation 'Wrath of God'. A covert operation which was meant to show the entire world, including the terrorists, that Israel is not going to give up fighting for its own people. An answer that is thought to have lasted for more than twenty years, it is now a subject of debate. A massacre presented all over the world, an operation meant to make justice for those who were simply unlucky, the given paper is going to bring back the details that have made this counterterrorism action to be a still discussed one, to this day, on account of the many conflicting perspectives that it generated. We will be taking a step back to the core causes that have created the proper environment for this event to happen, but our main focus will remain on the actual actions that have been taken in order to send a clear message in the world of terrorism.*

Keywords: *retaliation, ethno-separatist terrorism, Mossad, counterterrorism, Munich Massacre.*

Black September and Ethno-Separatist Terrorism

It is not a novelty the fact that the arab-israeli conflict seems to be a never ending story in the Middle East. The political tension, the military conflicts and the disputes in the area create multiple threats for the state actors and tend to shift the tendency from a security environment to an insecurity environment. Given the fact that the international stage is dominated by *change* and *transformation*, it could be said that we are witnessing an entire reconfiguration of the global security and power relations. In this, terrorism plays quite a big part. Nowadays, we are accustomed to different attacks, all over the world, at any time. However, today's reality is different from the one of the year 1972. Back then, what happened at the Munich Olympic Games was utterly inconceivable. For this reason, and not only, this paper will present the context in which the massacre took place, the actions taken by the israeli intelligence agency, the type of counterterrorism which characterises the operation and, of course, a brief analyze of the terrorists' motivation for their actions.

1972 Munich Olympics- A context for terror

As said before, I will begin my analysis by explaining the context which allowed this story to develop. Everything began in the year 1972, at the Munich Olympic Games. The moment itself has been chosen carefully in order to carry a deep meaning. By the time, the German territory had hosted the Olympics back in 1936, when Hitler used the moment in order to promote his anti-Semitic views and ideology, creating the Holocaust soon after that. For this reason, in 1972, the German people was trying with all its effort to detach from the moment, to show the world that they are not defined by Hitler and its Holocaust. Therefore, the Olympics were called *The Games of Peace and Joy*. Even more so, the security measures were consistently reduced to maintain a friendly and peaceful atmosphere. But all these measures have made the place a real vulnerable one.¹ For a particular terrorist organization called Black September, the ceremony was offering even a bigger bonus: international visibility. It could be said that this attack is a modern one given the visibility and internationalization that it received. In other words, the entire attack and efforts of Germans

¹ Simon, Reeve, *One Day in September*, Cap. 1 *The Takeover*, Arcade Publishing, New York, 2000, pp. 1-3.